

# *City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska*

Date: August 15, 2013

To: Convention and Visitor Bureau

From: Carol Rushmore

Re: CVB updates

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Convention and Visitor Bureau, the following is a brief summary of updates.

## **Travel Writers:**

Travel Writer Eric Lucas, with whom I met last year at the Alaska Media Roadshow, was in Wrangell during Bearfest. He had originally planned to come for the Shakes Rededication but had to change his plans. Based on preliminary feedback, I think he enjoyed the stay here and was impressed with the symposium at Bearfest and the numerous activities that were scheduled (although he did not participate in much except the Symposium). He also went on River and Bear trips and thoroughly seemed to enjoy them as well. Attached is a brief profile of him.

William Gurstelle and his wife arrived on the Silvershadow. Were seeking a trip to Anan for an article but there was only space for a River trip. They were not able to charter from the ship as he was a lecturer on board. Information attached.

RVWest Travel writers Duane and Linda Philson were in town with their RV. I had them scheduled for a River trip but he wasn't feeling well so they hung around town. They thoroughly enjoyed Wrangell – our open hospitality, assistance provided, town friendliness and we will be highlighted in their writings and blog.

Travel Writer Edward Readicker-Henderson will be in town beginning Saturday. He is writing for the National Geographic Traveler. He has been to Wrangell several times and Wrangell is one of his favorite spots. A photographer will also be here and will be shooting the River by boat and air, Anan, Chief Shakes house, and other sites around town.

Photographers for Every Day with Rachel Ray will be here the end of August to shoot photos of Stikine Inn and Diamond C. A travel writer here during Bearfest from 2 years ago has a contract for a story about riding the ferry and southeast cuisine. They will also be taken to Anan and hopefully there are still some bears around at that time.

### **Website Stat Summary:**

Stats were started on the new site the very end of January 2012.

I have various stats that I can discuss at the meeting, but here are a few key stats.

August 12, 2012 to August 11, 2013

TOTAL VISITORS (All hits to site counted): 56,273

NEW: 33,623

RETURNING: 23,010

TOTAL UNIQUE VISITORS (each visitor only counted once): 34,612

#### **LOCATION OF VISITOR:**

US – 50,929

CANADA -1,290

AUST – 449

INDA – 403

UK – 367

#### **PAGES VIEWED THE MOST (Total hits/unique hits)**

HOME – 33,720/24,646

VISITOR SERVICES THINGS TO DO – 10,212/7,082

JOBS – 5,154/3,761

VISITOR SERVICES PLACES TO STAY – 4,907/4,055

VISITOR SERVICES – 4,355/3,248

VISITOR SERVICES ANAN – 3,766/2,816

RFPS – 2,944/2,589

POLICE – 2,591/1,711

LIBRARY – 2,564/1,943

CALENDAR – 2,467/1,706

### **Tradeshows:**

At this time, Wrangell will be participating in three consumer tradeshows.

1. AMHS 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration in Bellingham, WA (CVB)
2. Fish Expo – November in Seattle (Port and Harbors)
3. Seattle Boat Show - January 24- February 2, 2014 (Port and CVB)
4. Convention Sales – Terri usually has several convention sales shows scheduled and I will let her report on those.
5. ATIA booth share opportunities include same as last year... LA, Boston, Chicago, will soon release their booth share opportunities for consumer travel shows - Wrangell usually participates in one of these options, or alternatively sends brochures to be represented.

### **Social Media:**

Wrangell CVB created a Facebook page this year (thank you Leslie for spearheading that).

There are more things that we can do with that and the visitor services portion of the website.

Business Directory was created but businesses are still being entered into the directory.

Encourage photos from visitors to be submitted – gets more people involved, need to figure out

how best. Also allows that to be Tweeted. I administer the CVB twitter account and bearfest twitter account.. but need ideas! This would be a great winter project to work on.

### **Advertising:**

Milepost advertising is currently being solicited for a cost share advert.

The AMHS is no longer printing schedules and therefore the Wrangell cost share page will no longer be done.

Fish Alaska, Alaska Magazine, State Travel Planner, Ketchikan Planner are still on the budget list. Any other opportunities to consider – such as label buy?

The Cooperative opportunities through ATIA have not yet been posted or announced.

Another opportunity would be to participate in Press Release distribution with Travel and Leisure News. If agree to 6 press releases, cost would be \$66/release to over 6500 media outlets nationwide. ([www.travelandleisurenews.com/program/](http://www.travelandleisurenews.com/program/)) provides more details.

Posters with an aerial of City of Wrangell were developed – approximately \$700 to design and print 200. Revenue generator to sell through City Hall, Museum gift store any other local outlets as well.

### **Festivals:**

Stikine River Birding Festival needs to be looked at closely. We had Vasily Baranyuk as the guest speaker... 30 years studying snow geese and wildlife of Wrangell Island in Russia. We had a good turnout for his presentation and the morning bird walk with Bonnie. The Artist's workshops (Katherine Hocker) were great with the kids, but not so much from the general public. And as always, the live bird demonstration with the Sitka Raptor Center was a positive.

One suggestion by the Bird Fest Committee is to just promote the whole month as Stikine River Birding. And then schedule a couple of walks, an artist if the school will help, maybe a speaker if we could get sponsorship to help fund. The USFS RAC grant will end after 2014. Committee is also working on updating the birding brochure. Suggestions are welcomed!

Bearfest In its 4<sup>th</sup> year, it still seems to be very positive with support. It appears that there were not as many locals that participated in the events, but there were more out of town persons that did.. so that is also a good thing. The Symposium was pretty well attended and Ak Dept of Fish and Game still continue to support. More local and corporate sponsorship is needed for continued level of offerings. USFS RAC grant ended this year, but the finances of Bearfest are positive. A financial report should be completed and available by end of October.

### **Salty Dog Rally June 14, 2014:**

Due to a connection made at the Seattle Boat Show and cultivated by CVB board member Leslie Cummings, Boating Puget Sound has decided to hold their Salty Dog Rally in Wrangell in June 14, 2014. This could bring 40-80 yachts into Wrangell on that date. We have some planning to do for a big party and celebration and organization of some scheduled activities- and information to put together. Attached is some basic information, go to [www.boatingpugetsound.com](http://www.boatingpugetsound.com) for some information. They travel as a group from Seattle to some destination, have minimum power requirements and a few other things as well, but a great opportunity for Wrangell.

**Conventions:**

In September of 2014, Wrangell will once again be hosting Southeast Conference. Last time was 2005 right after the Grand Opening of the facility. Planning needs to start in October. This is a huge event.. possibly 250 people attending. We have requested a ferry, but do not know if we will be successful or not. But there are a lot of other details that will need to be organized. Dates are not set yet.. SEC Board will do so, but also waiting to see about the ferry.